

“Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”

– Voltaire

(French Philosopher and Writer. 1694-1778)

Conservation Heroes, AOK Awards and Other Recognitions

Periodically, possibly to become annually, Audubon of Kansas presents a series of conservation-related awards to recognize the good work and leadership – often leadership by example of uniquely dedicated people throughout the state and region. These and so many other people deserve our thanks. Nominations can be submitted at any time. The most recent awards presented are outlined below.

The **Haverfields, Barnhardts, and Maxine Blank** own the 10,000-acre ranch complex in western Kansas which serves as the primary reintroduction site for Black-footed Ferrets. They are conservation heroes who have persevered in their dedication, under fire and at considerable financial expense involving litigation.



Bob McElroy (left) presents Lifetime Conservation Award to Dr. Robert J. Robel (right) for his research and conservation work with Greater and Lesser Prairie-chickens.

Dr. Robel has devoted most of his professional career at KSU conducting research on Greater and Lesser Prairie-chickens and is one of the world’s authorities on grouse of grasslands. His professional expertise and endless work established the science-based standard for prairie grouse conservation in many areas. Dr. Robel served as science advisor on the Kansas Wind & Prairie Task Force and was appointed in 2007 to the Wind Turbine Guidelines Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) by Dirk Kempthorne, then the Secretary of the Interior, and re-appointed to that Committee in 2009 by Ken Salazar, the current Secretary of the Interior. The FAC’s mission was to develop siting guidelines to avoid or

minimize adverse impacts on wildlife and their habitats. It is anticipated that the guidelines will become effective on December 31, 2011.

Dick Seaton has provided a decade of leadership to AOK and currently serves as Vice-president of Policy & Legal Affairs. Along with A. Scott Ritchie, who also serves on the board, Dick served on Governor Kathleen Sebelius’s Wind & Prairie Task Force which advanced the understanding that our remaining Tallgrass Prairie landscapes are worthy of protection from industrial scale windpower and other development. **Hoogy Hoogheem** has been a wonderful and inspiring leader in the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society since he and Carol retired to Kansas from Massachusetts in 1995.

Deb Miller served as Secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation under Governor Kathleen Sebelius and was selected to continue in that role by Governor Brownback. She was receptive to reduced mowing and spraying practices that allow native grasses and wildflowers to flourish within many of the 150,000 acres of vegetated rights-of-way along 10,000 miles of state highways – enhancements advocated by AOK for decades. She established an Aesthetics Task Force in 2008 and welcomed representatives from AOK, Kansas Wildlife Federation, Kansas Native Plant Society, and others to help develop a new ecologically and economic (tax savings) approach.



Irwin “Hoogy” Hoogheem (right) is recognized by Audubon of Kansas with the 2010 Chapter Leadership & Nature Appreciation EarthKeeper Award

Thank You

Gordon & Martha Barnhardt

Prairie Wildlife Conservation & Private Land Stewardship Award

Larry & Bette Haverfield

Prairie Wildlife Conservation & Private Land Stewardship Award

Maxine Blank

Prairie Wildlife Conservation & Private Land Stewardship Award

Robert J. Robel

Greater & Lesser Prairie-chicken Lifetime Conservation Award

Dick Seaton

Excellence in Conservation Leadership Award

Irwin “Hoogy” Hoogheem

Chapter Leadership & Nature Appreciation EarthKeeper Award

Deb Miller

Public Land Stewardship & Roadside Beautification Award



Barbara Atkinson

Anonymous donor gives \$1 million to establish the Barbara F. Atkinson Professorship at KU Medical Center

An anonymous donor has given \$1 million to support a professorship at Kansas University Medical Center in honor of KUMC’s executive vice chancellor and dean of its School of Medicine.

The gift will establish the Barbara F. Atkinson Professorship in pathology and laboratory medicine. The professorship will be in the field of cytopathology, a branch of pathology that studies and diagnoses disease at the cellular level. – *Lawrence Journal World*, August 29.

Barbara is an AOK trustee. Audubon of Kansas is honored to have so many extraordinarily accomplished people on its Board of Trustees. We all congratulate Barbara Atkinson for this wonderful recognition.

Recognition for Audubon TEAMWORK and PARTNERSHIPS with Others

Audubon of Kansas Executive Director, Ron Klataske, was recently selected to receive the Nebraska Wildlife Federation’s 2011 Conservation Professional Award. He was selected for decades of work to conserve Nebraska rivers (the Platte and Niobrara), and stewardship efforts at the Hutton Niobrara Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary.

Last year during the annual Rivers and Wildlife Conference in Kearney, Nebraska, Audubon chapter leader Grant Newbold presented Ron Klataske with a set of metal dancing crane sculptures commissioned by local Audubon chapters in Nebraska. They were presented in appreciation for efforts earlier in his



Grant Newbold is pictured with framed calligraphy prepared by Art Pierce as part of the presentation. Marge Kennedy views the crane sculptures. Marge and husband Bruce have been active members of Audubon since the early 1970s. Photos by Patty Forsburg.



Ron Klataske, Executive Director AOK

career devoted to forming local Audubon chapters in the state. Ron’s plan is to have them placed outside the entrance to the visitor’s gallery at the Niobrara Sanctuary.

Earlier, but not previously reported here, Klataske was honored with the **John K. Strickler Award** presented by the Kansas Association of Conservation and Environmental Education. The award “recognizes the lifetime achievements of an individual in the field of Environmental Education.”

While serving as West-Central Regional Vice President of the National Audubon Society, he developed the proposal that led to the establishment of the 10,000-acre Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County. One of the preserve’s landmarks, an old school house, symbolizes his desire to educate everyone about this unique ecosystem.

Mike Hudson, who served as our Director of Development since 2009, recently returned to graduate school at Kansas State University. He is pursuing a M.S. in Horticulture with an emphasis on Park Management & Conservation. In collaboration with his graduate advisor, Ted Cable, Mike’s research involves the economic impact of the Cimarron National Grasslands in extreme southwestern Kansas.